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ABSTRACT

This kit, designed for leaders and participants, provides a model for organizing and taking part in Community Consultation Groups. The kit was designed to be used in connection with community concerns about growth in Boulder, Colorado. These groups build upon a previous survey to assist the Commission in determining specific growth concerns in the Boulder community. First, the kit tells how to select a topic for group discussion by using the previous survey results, introduces the nominal method which allows all to share in discussion, and provides group summary sheet forms. Secondly, results of a newspaper survey which measured goals and attitudes of Boulder residents toward growth are appended. Survey findings of an interesting cross-section of the population indicated that respondents ranked the natural setting and general environment as what they liked best about the Boulder area, and traffic congestion and related problems as what they least liked about the area. (SJM)

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Nominal Method

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION KIT

Boulder Area Growth Study Commission
January, 1973

BOULDER AREA GROWTH STUDY COMMISSION
1206 Euclid Street, Boulder, Colorado 80302
Phone 303 442-2020 Ext. 230

A commission appointed jointly by
the City and the County of Boulder

January, 1973

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The Boulder Area Growth Study Commission is delighted that you are willing to help in its analysis of the optimum population and growth rate for the Boulder Valley. Your ideas are important in the effort to determine what kind of a community you want. The Commission, appointed by both the City Council and the County Commissioners, sees this help in three steps:

YOU, THE INDIVIDUAL--many citizens filled out the newspaper survey on goals and attitudes, and we enclose a brief summary of the answers.

YOU, EXCHANGING IDEAS--in the Community Consultation Groups described in this kit, you will build on the survey results to give us more information about specific concerns you have about your neighborhood and community.

YOU, THE INFORMED CITIZEN--after study and analysis, we will invite you to share with us in defining the choices the Boulder area has for its future, using fact sheets and discussion groups.

The next pages tell you how to organize and take part in the Community Consultation Groups.

Sincerely,

Anne U. White

Anne U. White
Director
Community Consultation

Members: Sandra H. Cooper, Chairman; Sanders G. Arnold, Andrew D. Briscoe, Lawrence C. Brown, Charles W. Howe, Phillip R. Martines, Charles A. Rice, Warren N. Rorrich, Richard D. Tate, Robert G. Trenka, Martha R. Weiser, Anne U. White, Stephen F. Williams.
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Using Summary Results to Choose a Topic

I. LEADERS AND PARTICIPANTS

When You Are a Group Leader

1. Arrange for one or more groups of 6-8 people to meet between now and February 18th.

2. Help the group hold the meeting.

   * Give each participant a copy of this kit to read through before coming to the meeting, preferably the day before.

   * Read this kit carefully yourself. Keep track of the time, following as much as possible the schedule detailed in Part III, Using the Nominal Method.

3. Complete the summary of the meeting, Part IV of this kit, and mail or bring to Harbeck House, 1206 Euclid, Boulder 80302. (Telephone 442-2020, Ext. 230.)

When You Are a Participant

1. Read through this kit ahead of the group meeting. Look at the survey results, and try to decide which one of the things that people wanted to change about Boulder is most important to you, and that you would like to talk about further at this meeting.

2. Write down and say the points that are important to you--your ideas are as important as anyone's.

II. SELECTING A TOPIC

There are two steps:

Step One: The group will look over the things people reported on the survey that they would like to see changed about Boulder (Graph 2 in the Appendix), and pick one topic for examination at the meeting. If the group feels very strongly about some other aspect of the community or neighborhood that is not listed in Graph 2, it should feel free to take that as the topic.

Step Two: Then, using the Nominal Method (Part III), participants will look at the problems, solutions and goals connected with this topic, and decide which are the most important.

Step One

The participants should look at the materials in the Appendix of this kit. Each should list on a 3 X 5 card the 5 topics he or she considers most significant. The item(s) you choose should be taken from the list in Graph 2.

The leader will ask each participant to give a score of 1 to the item on the card he feels is least important, writing it on the card. Then each person should give a score of 5 to the most important item. Each person will have 3 items left, and should give a score of 2 to one of these he feels is least important. The remaining two items get a score of 3 or 4. The leader then goes around the group, listing the scores for each item. The highest score will give the topic for the group to talk about at this meeting.

These topics are very general and can include a lot of different concerns. We would like to get the group's help in providing

information as to what the problems connected with the topic are, what solutions people see as feasible, and what goals they have for these topics.

For example, if the group decided to talk about greenbelt areas and open space, it might consider the following questions. Do you use the Greenbelt areas yourself, or do you like the idea that you could use them? How many people in the group have actually been to a Greenbelt in the past 3 months? Is the distance to get to open space an important point? Is open space useful if you can just look at it, but can't go in it because it is not public property? Are the elements of greenbelts and open space that interest you controllable in the neighborhood context, or do they depend on a city, county or state policy?

There can be a wide range of questions and opinions for any topic chosen.

Step Two

The nominal method is simply one way of allowing everyone in a small group to make his or her input. Often in groups, it is the very vocal or articulate people who get the attention of the group. With the nominal method, everyone gets a chance to write down on a card his or her own points, and to clarify them in turn. Then they are written up on large sheets of paper for all to consider. The final step is to decide which points are the most important ones for your particular group. Procedures are detailed in Part III.

We suggest that the group members write down on their cards whatever points come to their mind about the topic. For example, in a seaside beach community, trash and pollution on the beach might be a problem. People might think of it in terms of how it affects swimming as the problem, stricter sewage control as a solution, and a clean beach or higher property value as goals. Each person might write down some or all of these points, or many others. Their points can be written up on the big sheets under the headings of Problems, Solutions, and Goals, with the participants deciding which heading is suitable. We would then like the group to rank the top 5 for each heading, (if there are that many items under each heading), using the process above.

III. USING THE NOMINAL METHOD

Now that you have selected a topic, you can use this work sheet as a guide to examining it. The Leader should select a scribe to record points, and keep track of the time.

Questions--to be presented to the group:

What problems do you see in this area of concern?

What are some solutions that come to mind for these problems?

What goals for the community do these problems and solutions suggest?

I. List items as they come to mind on 3 X 5 cards in a few words. List as many items as you can in the time allowed. Feel free to be specific about items concerning your neighborhood.

Time: 20 minutes.

II. Recording ideas. Select a scribe to record the group's ideas. Use three large sheets of paper: one labeled Problems, one labeled Solutions and one labeled Goals. Ask each person in turn to offer one item and indicate on which sheet it should be listed. No discussion. Continue making rounds until all items are listed. (Don't list obvious duplications, but don't condense.)

Time: 20 minutes.

III. Clarification of items. Leader to go over each item asking for brief clarification and discussion. Emphasize the need to stick to subject, and to give everyone a chance to talk.

Time: 40 minutes.

IV. Voting and reporting. The Leader asks each person to list two to five of the most crucial items in each of the three categories. Then give each item a ranking: 5 being most crucial and 1 being least crucial. Collect the cards and tally the points for each item on the large sheets. The five highest vote-getting items should then be recorded on the "Community Group Summary Statement" sheet. A summary of what the group thinks about this meeting should be recorded here and the sheet turned in to the Growth Study Commission Office.

Time: 25 minutes.

List of materials needed:

* Several pencils.

* Magic marker (for recorder).

* 3 X 5 cards or small slips of paper (4 for each person).

* 4 large sheets of paper.

* masking tape--to put sheets up where everyone can see them.

Thanks for your help!

IV. GROUP SUMMARY SHEET

Neighborhood represented (if there is one): _____

_____

Description of group: _____

_____

Number of participants: _____ Date of meeting: _____

TOPIC SELECTED: _____

PROBLEMS:

Most important 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Least important 5. _____

SOLUTIONS:

Most important 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Least important 5. _____

IV. GROUP SUMMARY SHEET (Continued)

GOALS:

Most important 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Least important 5. _____

Comments on this meeting: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Name of Leader _____

Telephone No. _____

Appendix

Using Survey Results to Choose a Topic

Boulder Area Growth Study Commission

Survey Results

More than 1400 residents voluntarily participated in a survey conducted by the Boulder Area Growth Study Commission. The questionnaire appeared on November 1, 1972, printed as a public service by three local newspapers. Extra copies were made available in a variety of public places throughout the study area which includes most of Boulder County (except the urban areas of Broomfield, Lyons, Longmont, Louisville and Lafayette.)

While the study was not specifically designed as a representative sample of community residents, it attracted a variety of answers from an interesting cross-section of the population. City of Boulder residents make up 81% of those who answered, with the four quadrants of the city fairly evenly represented; 6% came from mountain areas, and 13% from other parts of the country. A little under 1/3 of them are under 30 years old, somewhat over 1/3 are in the 30-44 age bracket, and the rest range up to over 90! Over 1/3 have lived here more than 10 years, and another 1/4 between 5 and 10 years. Homeowners make up about 2/3 of the respondents. They hold a variety of occupations. Four out of ten are professional and technical workers or teachers; the others are businessmen, salespeople, serviceworkers, firemen, policemen , craftsmen, housewives (15%), farmers, laborers or students (14%.) Three out of four have had some college or more advanced work. Men led women in responses by a slight margin.

When asked what they like about the Boulder area, natural setting near the mountains and the general environment rank first place most often (49%), (see graphs 1 and 2). Boulder is thought of as a city of about the right size (15%), and the friendly and concerned people in the area considered its major asset by some (9%). The greenbelt program is referred to both as a contribution to the beauty of the area and as evidence of citizen concern. In addition, the area has the advantage of the University, and good cultural opportunities (4%), followed by good recreational facilities. A variety of specific advantages were chosen as most important by 16% of the respondents.

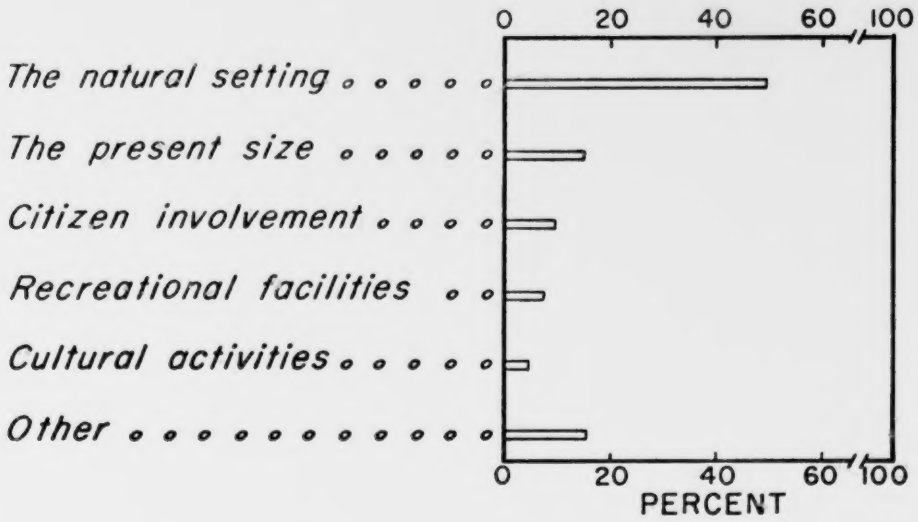
Most people mentioned between two and six items - the natural setting and environment were mentioned the most number of times, followed by the present size, recreational facilities (including parks and greenbelt), and then cultural activities and the University.

What people would like to change most centers around traffic congestion and the automobile, expressed as dissatisfaction with parking problems, the increasing number of cars, and lack of effective mass transit. A second area of difficulty is with law enforcement and crime - including a variety of attitudes such as a general desire to keep crime down, resentment against transients and the feeling of minority group members that they are not treated fairly by the police.

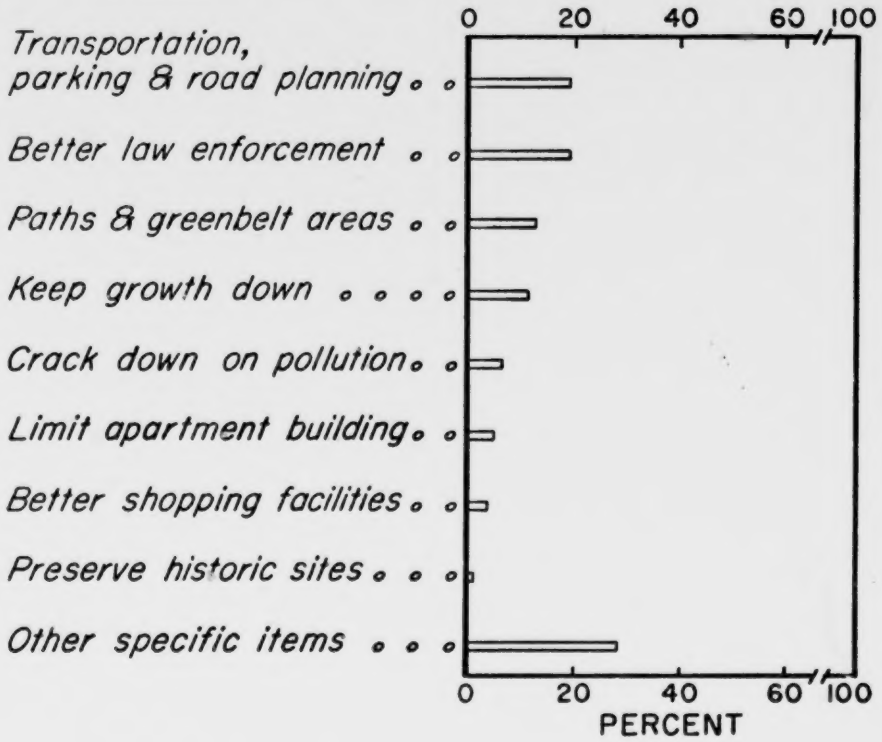
The third concern is for more bike, walking and bridle paths, and greenbelt land. Other concerns are to keep growth down, diminish pollution, limit building of apartment homes, have more or better shopping facilities, and preserve historic sites. Many people mentioned specific needs such as additional bus stops and shelters, or traffic lights at particular places.

When asked to react to a number of specific statements (see graph 3), the respondents indicated that they overwhelmingly agreed on the need to control pollution, preserve mountain parks and natural areas, improve public transportation and maintain and improve present streets and roads. On other road questions there was less agreement. On land use controls, 80% disagreed with the statements that there should be fewer controls. The wide spread of opinion on two items indicates areas of considerable current debate. These statements were "Have a greater variety of stores and restaurants" and "Have more clustered homes or apartments with common open space."

The many thoughtful answers on the questionnaire add to material on community goals the Commission has already received through a public hearing and from letters from interested groups and private individuals. The next step will be the formation of small discussion groups to explore the issues and choices in more depth. This will start with the 150 individuals who indicated on their questionnaires that they would be willing to help in organizing such groups.



1. Answers rated as most important to the question "What do you like about the Boulder area now?" (Number of responses = 1155)



2. Answers rated as most important to the question "What would you like to see changed, added or eliminated?" (Number of responses = 823)

3. Agreement or disagreement with specific statements: